

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5938

INFO USUN NEW YORK 315

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL HAMILTON

AMCONSUL BELIZE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 0973

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOF, GT, BH, UK

SUBJECT: UK-GUATEMALAN NEGOTIATIONS ON BELIZE

REF: GUATEMALA 0588

1. GUATEMALAN DAILY GRAFICO REPORTED FEBRUARY 19, WITHOUT INDICATING SOURCE, THAT EX-FONMINS JORGE SKINNER-KLEE AND ROBERTO HERRERA AND FONOFF LEGAL DIRECTOR LUSI AYCINENA HAD LEFT LAST WEEKEND FOR WASHINGTON TO RESUME TALKS WITH UK REPS ON FUTURE OF BELIZE. STORY SAYS "EVERYTHING APPEARS INDICATE THAT (GUATEMALAN NEGOTIATORS) WILL SEEK MEDIATION AND HELP FROM US STATE DEPARTMENT, WHICH WAS GIVEN PREVIOUSLY" PRIOR TO LAST BREAKOFF OF TALKS.

2. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE FROM REFTEL, STORY ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE EXCEPT FOR LOCUS OF TALKS AND REFERENCE TO US MEDIATION. BRITISH CONSUL WILLIAM MCQUILLAN CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT GUATEMALAN DELEGATION HAD LEFT FEBRUARY 16 FOR NEW YORK AND WAS SCHEDULED ARRIVE IN BERMUDA FEBRUARY 19 FOR TALKS WITH BRITISH FEBRUARY 20-21. IN ADDITION THOSE MENTIONED ABOVE, MCQUILLAN SAID GUATEMALAN DEL INCLUDED FERNANDO SANCHEZ, DIRECTOR BELIZE

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AFFAIRS IN FONOFF, AND JULIO VIELMAN, PRIVATE BANKER WHO WAS TAKEN

ALONG AS ECONOMIC ADVISER. BRITISH DEL WAS TO BE HEADED BY UN PERM-
REP RICHARD, BUT MCQUILLAN WONDERED IF UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING
MIGHT KEEP HIM IN NEW YORK. IF SO, LEADERSHIP WOULD FALL TO
NICHOLAS LARMOUR, HEAD OF WEST INDIES AND ATLANTIC DESK IN FCO.

3. MCQUILLAN SAID TALKS WERE INTENDED PREPARE FOR MINISTERIAL-
LEVEL MEETING AND BERMUDA NEGOTIATORS WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER
OTHER PREPARATORY MEETINGS WERE NECESSARY AND INDEED WHETHER THERE
WERE SUFFICIENT PROSPECTS OF PROGRESS THAT IT WORTHWHILE CONTINUE
MEET. TWO DELEGATIONS WILL ALSO HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT IF ANYTHING
THEIR GOVERNMENTS SHOULD TELL PRESS, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW LEAK
REPORTED ABOVE AND RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT
LAUGERUD THAT RESUMPTION OF TALKS WITH BRITISH WAS IMMINENT.
MCQUILLAN SAID BRITISH REQUEST FOR CONFIDENTIALITY WAS IN CONSIDER-
ATION FOR BELIZE GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE PLACED IN
AWKWARD POSITION IF FACT ITS FUTURE BEING DISCUSSED WITHOUT
ITS PARTICIPATION BECAME KNOWN IN BELIZE.

4. AFTER BERDUDA MEETING BRITISH DEL WILL FLY TO BELIZE TO
BRIEF GOVERNOR AND PRIME MINISTER PRICE. MCQUILLAN ARRIVING
BELIZE FEBRUARY 22 TO ATTEND BRIEFINGS AND PROMISED GIVE US RUN-
DOWN ON HIS RETURN.

5. IN DEVELOPMENT HOPEFULLY UNRELATED TO ALL THIS, ALL PAPERS
REPORTED AT LENGTH FEBRUARY 18 AND 19 ON ALLEGED ARREST LAST
WEEK
OF FOUR CHICLE WORKERS ON GUATEMALAN SOIL BY (VARIOUSLY)
BRITISH TROOPS OR BELICEAN POLICE. ACCORDING FELLOW WORKERS,
ARREST OCCURRED BETWEEN PUSHILA AND TANCOJ IN MUNICIPALITY OF SAN
LUIS. BOTH BRITISH CONSUL AND GOG OFFICIALS TOLD REPORTERS THEY HAD
NO INFORMATION ON ARREST.

6. MCQUILLAN TOLD US FEBRUARY 20 HE HAD JUST RECEIVED CONFIRMATION
FROM BELIZE THAT FOUR GUATEMALANS HAD BEEN ARRESTED BY POLICE
IN TOLEDO DISTRICT, WELL INSIDE BELIZE, AND CHARGED BEFORE MAGISTRATE
IN PUNTA GORDA WITH ILLEGAL ENTRY, ILLEGAL CHICLE BLEEDING AND
ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF ARMS. ARMS AND CHICLE WERE CONFISCATED,
FINES OF \$350 EACH LEVIED, AND FOUR WERE SERVING SEVEN-MONTH
TERMS IN VIEW THEIR INABILITY PAY FINES. MCQUILLAN SAID
INCURSIONS BY CHICLE GATHERS WERE FREQUENT WHENEVER CHICLE GREW
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SCARCE ON GUATEMALAN SIDE OF BORDER. ONLY SIGNIFICANCE TO
INCIDENT IS ITS POSSIBLE EXPLOITATION BY GUATEMALAN PRESS OR
GOVERNMENT; FORMER HAS ALMOST DISAPPEARED FROM FEBRUARY 20
EDITIONS, AND THERE IS NO SIGN LATTER IS OCCURRING. ASSISTANT G-2
TOLD DATT THAT CHICLEROIS IN THAT AREA OFTEN WANDER ACROSS UN-
MARKED BORDER AND IMPLIED GOG DID NOT ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO
INCIDENT.

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